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SUBJECT: S/CT CRUMPTON HEARS POLISH PERSPECTIVES OF THE GWOT

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Classified By: Polcouns Mary T. Curtin for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) SUMMARY: In separate meetings on December 13, Deputy Foreign Minister, Witold Waszczykowski, and Chief of the National Security Bureau, Wladyslaw Stasiak, conveyed their thoughts on counterterrorism to Ambassador Henry Crumpton, State Department Coordinator for Counterterrorism. In his signature acerbic style, Waszczykowski expressed doubts about the sincerity of U.S. consultations with Poland, called for engagement with Iran and Syria and opined that democracy might not be the solution in Afghanistan. In contrast, Stasiak pushed for closer cooperation with the National War College to enhance Poland's interagency coordination. Ambassador Crumpton outlined the USG's evolving view of the terrorist threat and thanked Poland for its extensive cooperation in the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). At these meetings and a lunch with senior MFA and MOD officials, Polish officials repeated the value they attach to regular consultations with us as they address public concerns over their Iraq and Afghanistan deployments. END SUMMARY

12. (C) "Nobody asked us about our experience in Iraq," before publishing the Iraq Study Group report lamented Waszczykowski as a prelude to his long list of complaints. He added that, in so far as Poland was concerned, it was her overseas missions, and not the Polish homeland, that were most vulnerable to terrorist strikes. Hence, Waszczykowski implied that Poland was assuming mortal risks in the GWOT and not receiving appropriate consideration from the U.S. in return. He remarked, "You have not engaged us in lessons learned in Iraq or discussions of the future there."

13. (C) Ambassador Crumpton protested Waszczykowski's view that the U.S. did not fully appreciate Poland's concerns or their contributions. He reiterated what he had said at the opening of the meeting - that the sole purpose of his visit was to thank the Poles for their contribution and to listen to their views. He noted that the Iraq Study Group report was a non-governmental report, not an official USG document, and that both the Pentagon and the State Department had yet to make their recommendations to the President based on the report. He was in Warsaw precisely to solicit Polish views, thus the notion that American officials were not consulting with Poland was completely incorrect.

Deputy FM: "Engage Iran and Syria" to Fix Iraq

14. (C) Moving on to substance, Waszczykowski took the

opportunity of the meeting to offer some advice based on Poland's past lessons. "Our advice is to engage Iran and Syria in some kind of dialogue. If you can't then let somebody else do it," he advised. He commented that we have used sticks and strong language with Iran and Syria for a long time, but we must work to disengage Syria from its friends and "bad habits" through more positive communication.

Waszczykowski recalled U.S. advice to Poland during the fall of Communism and said that the U.S. had advised Poland to include stakeholders from the old system in a "round table" discussion of the road ahead. In contrast, after Saddam's ouster, the U.S. recklessly dismissed all Baathists and soldiers from Iraq's former regime and thereby squandered the opportunity for reform created by Saddam's ouster. Poles and other Central Europeans were wrong in expecting Iraqis to act as they had after the fall of communism, seizing the opportunity to build democracy.

15. (C) On Afghanistan, Waszczykowski said, "Maybe Democracy is not the answer, maybe some other form of law and order," would serve better. He noted that the Polish public would not support a 20-30 year deployment there especially since Balkan deployments had entered their 11th year. Waszczykowski noted the need for the international community, especially the EU, to stimulate the Afghan agricultural sector by buying its products, thus drawing it away from opium cultivation. Finally, Waszczykowski urged Ambassador Crumpton to, "Respect their (Afghan) customs and traditions, we can not hastily impose our solutions."

16. (C) Ambassador Crumpton outlined the ongoing struggle against four circles of violence in Iraq: international terrorists in search of safe haven, the anti-Coalition insurgency, Sunni-Shia violence and criminal violence for profit. He added that we must think in terms of local tribal issues, and also consider the impact of regional actors such as Iran and Syria. The Ambassador underscored an urgent need to deny Al-Qaida safe haven in Iraq's Al-Anbar province. When speaking on Afghanistan, he noted the challenge posed by Al-Qaida's safe haven along the Pakistani border and

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described the need for "soft power" via economic assistance to secure Afghanistan. As evidence of progress, he recalled that 4.7 million Afghans had returned to a country with a democratically elected president and parliament.

Polish NSC Chief: "We need interagency cooperation"

17. (C) National Security Advisor Stasiak asked Crumpton for U.S. help to improve Poland's interagency communication. He began by citing Poland's effort to author legislation that would: integrate agencies, define terrorism and proscribe penalties for terrorist activities. He credited the Embassy-run, U.S.-Polish Joint Counter Terrorism Working Group (JCTWG) with bringing the disparate elements of his government closer together through meetings and exercises. He went on to ask for help in setting up a national security academy to advance interagency integration and emergency preparedness. Ambassador Crumpton suggested that Stasiak consider sending Polish candidates to the U.S. National War College for these purposes. Stasiak agreed and took that item for action. (Note: Poland frequently sends officers to the National War College and other senior service institutes. End Note)

18. (C) COMMENT: The contrast between Ambassador Crumpton's meetings with Stasiak and Waszczykowski was largely personality driven, but illustrates some breadth of opinion concerning the GWOT within the Polish government. However, at the top of the government, President Lech Kaczynski and Prime Minister Jaroslaw Kaczynski both stand as unwavering supporters of President Bush and U.S. policy in the GWOT. Waszczykowski's pessimism does not portend any change in

Polish policy, but it does illustrate that we cannot take Polish support for granted and that Poles will want to be included at a senior level in consultations on Broader Middle East policy. END COMMENT.

19. (U) This cable was cleared with S/CT.
HILLAS